IX 1

SACRED DANCE GUILD NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT: MRS. ROBERT SONEN (PAT), 47 CLEVELAND STREET, ORANGE, NEW JERSEY.
EDITOR: MRS. WALTER A. TAYLOR (MARGARET FISK), 7 FORT STREET, ATHENS, OHIO.

SEND $3.00 ANNUAL DUES (PAYABLE EACH FEBRUARY) TO MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN, MRS. ORION SHERWOOD, 530 RIVERDALE AVE., YONKERS, N. Y. THE DUES COVER THE SUBSCRIPTION TO THE THREE ISSUES OF THIS NEWSLETTER IN APRIL AND SEPTEMBER, 1966. AND IN JANUARY, 1967. YOUR $3.00 MUST BE PAID IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE NEWSLETTERS.

September, 1966

REJOICE IN THE NEW PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE ON THE BACK PAGE!

Those long-awaited promotional brochures are at last printed and ready for distribution. We owe Milton Richman a vote of thanks for handling the business end of the production, and also for suggesting the excellent cover photo (made available to us through the courtesy of Barbara Mettler). Thanks, too, to Jeanne Saunders for suggesting the double-fold format which provides us with a detachable membership application.

No finished product could please everyone, and already we're hearing about some obvious shortcomings! Our advisers' names were inadvertently omitted, and our small list of sponsors' names was left out of this printing because of space limitations. The text will undergo up-dating, and space problems will be worked out so that all names can be included in future printings. In the meantime, the brochure is, we feel, an attractive replacement for the old mimeographed fact sheet and adequate for present promotional purposes.

Brochures will be mailed out to officers and members who request them for distribution at local workshops; they will also be available for general distribution at our own workshops, institutes and regional workshops.

Judith A. Bennett
NATIONAL PUBLICITY CHAIRMAN

Thank you, Judy, for carrying out this needed publicity. When I saw the copy a week ago, I called Judy to ask her if we could send one to each of our members right now in the Newsletter. This is to be used. Show it to your minister, music committee, youth workers, those interested in the arts and many others in your community. Send for more and gain many new members. We need to have more people understand the aims and the activities of this pioneering SACRED DANCE GUILD.

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Pamphlets will be made available this fall to ministers and church workers who need encouragemant and aid in establishing DANCE CHOIRS and introducing dance into the church, and also using creative movement in the church schools as a teaching-learning technique. Mary Jane Wolbers is chairman of this committee.

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SDG ANNUAL MEETING AND MID-WINTER WORKSHOP - FEB. 24 & 25, 1967 in NEW YORK CITY, N.Y. Friday afternoon to Saturday afternoon. Noami Aleh-Leaf, chr., urges that all members attend. "Only thru constant efforts to develop our dance technique and to widen our scope can we hope to attain the goals to which SDG is dedicated."

JUNE INSTITUTE AT DREW UNIVERSITY - June 21-23 - GREAT SUCCESS

Pat Sonen writes: "I applaud the high quality of program and enthusiastic attendance (40 full time registrants) at the June Institute. What a marvelous experience for those involved as well as observers!"

The Executive Board met while at Drew and discussed these ideas - among many others:

1. Possibility of setting up speakers bureau making it available to local TV stations, churches, etc., on request. Perhaps teams of speakers, clergy and dancers. (Judy Bennett is doing this)

2. M.J. Wolbers reported on efforts to encourage planning and execution of area workshops with an option: Sacred Dance Guild to provide assistance, guidance in planning; or co-sponsored by Sacred Dance G.

3. Pat Sonen raised the question of advisors to the S.D.G. Moved by L. Sherwood, seconded by J. Fuller that the following artists be voted in as advisors to the Guild and that a letter be sent to each: Ruth St. Denis; Mary Anthony; Ted Shawn; Jess Meeker; Forrest Coggin.

A CAPSULE ACCOUNT OF THE INSTITUTE BY A NEWCOMER, TRUDY FRENIERE

Trudy Freniere (Mrs. E. Richard), Oxbow Rd., Concord, Mass. is an abstract expressionist painter. She has been active in the Acton Community Dance Theatre, "studied modern dance later in life" and has "great interest in motion, and rhythmic patterns" and loves "haiku and all things Japanese".

TUESDAY, JUNE 21

Rabbi Richman "The Jewish Religious Calendar"
1. Singing is a rhythmic form of speaking
2. Dancing is a rhythmic form of movement
3. Worship involves the total body
4. Interplay between the group and individual
5. Ultimate mystical sense . . . forgetting the self completely

The Reverend Miller "The Liberal Protestant Viewpoint"
Informative talk covering every aspect of Christianity.

In the afternoon:
FUNDAMENTAL DANCE MOVEMENT - Drid Williams
Illustrating the basic positions and their meaning in primitive cultures. Then breaking into three groups. Our group leader: Noami Aleh-Leaf - a very spirited leader.

In the evening: STATIONS OF INFORMATION - Exchange of Ideas
Ideas on costumes, publicity, books, space problems. Many different solutions offered. Discussion on the organization of a Church Choir.
DEVOTIONS led by Drid Williams. Simple hand, arm, head, shoulder movements with audience participation. The kind of thing a whole congregation could follow and find meaningful.

WEDNESDAY Morning

Jeanne Fuller developed expression in dance movement. Breaking into small groups for work toward Thursday morning devotions.

JUNE INSTITUTE (continued)

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION - The Reverend Robert Sonen
Religious Dance, a pioneer movement . . . outside the limits of any tradition, scripture . . . could move in direction of universal love . The laity may assume a more important role - becoming involved in the life of the church. "God is dead" movement is questioning religion in its traditional forms. A spirited discussion on: "Is religious dance just an art form?" Conclusion: Certainly not, though some dancer's craft is necessary.

In the afternoon:
DANCE DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSAL CONCERNS
Everyone chose one of three dance leaders and worked on a theme. I chose Drid Williams, an earthy, powerful leader. We managed to come up with a totally absorbing creative dance suggesting the universality of man. Drid entitled it:"By This Ye Shall Know That All Men Are Brethren". We could think of no music to use with it;so Drid accompanied us on the drum and bell, each struck at the appropriate time. No beats were counted - all was worked out intuitively.

In the evening: SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS:
St. John's Congregational Church Dance Choir of Springfield, Mass. Led by Sylvia Humphrey.
A kinescope film:"Experience Anonyme" with a dance group from the U. of Wisconsin and directed by Drid Williams.
"Dances of the Bible" by Noami Aleh-Leaf. Great depth of expression and control, a joyous dancer ably assisted in narration by B. McDonald.
First Unitarian Dance Choir, Orange, N.J., Pat Sonen, director, to the narration of a poem by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

THURSDAY in the morning

DEVOTIONS Several groups presented dances developed under the direction of Jeanne Fuller. Our group: Belle McDonald, Clem Burton and I illustrated "Greed". From the same poem Lynne Sherwood's group gave a very light dance. Then everyone responded individually to a reading from a psalm. (The editor and the readers would like to know the poem and the psalm, wouldn't we!)

SHARING THE DEVELOPED DANCE ASSIGNMENTS
So totally engrossing were all these presentations, that notes were completely forgotten - such a feeling of unity and belonging - this culmination of the workshop. "The ultimate mystical sense - forgetting the self completely" as Rabbi Richman said. It was happening.

The stimulation, making new friends from all areas and walks of life, light and serious discussions - all this and more. The young girls in song to the accompaniment of a guitar - all in one dorm. Noami Aleh-Leaf enthusiastically teaching us ethnic dances. A refreshing dip in the pool every late afternoon. People back home questioning "Are you getting religious?" What I "got" I can't explain. But the Sacred Dance for me from now on!

A SACRED DANCE SHARING SESSION ON SATURDAY, OCT. 1 from 10-3 at the WINCHESTER UNITARIAN CHURCH, MASS. ROBERT STORER AND VIRGINIA HUFFINE INVITE GROUP LEADERS FOR A WORKSHOP - SHARING IDEAS FOR THANKSGIVING AND CHRISTMAS. "Practical ideas" and adaptable ideas in use of space. Bring a sandwich and dash over for the day!

SUPPLEMENT TO MEMBERSHIP LIST (since April, 1966)

[redacted]

Sacred Dance Guild of America

New York Regional Workshop

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22nd 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Registration begins 9:3

GRACE METHODIST CHURCH 265 Van Ness Street NEWBURGH, NEW YORK

Located on the Hudson River, north of West Point. Easily reached via N.Y. Thruway, Route 9-W, Newburgh-Beacon Bridge.

Workshop Leader - Lynn Sherwood

Graduate of Smith College, M.A. in Creative Arts from N.Y.U. Extensive dance training includes study with Limon, Graham, Horst, Schoenberg, Anthony, Gelabert, Evan (dance therapy), Connecticut College School of Dance, and Folk Dance House of N.Y.C.

The workshop will emphasize the essentials of dance composition, especially as they relate to sacred dance.

REGISTRATION FEE $2.50 ($1.00 payable in advance) LUNCHEON RESERVATION

PLEASE NOTE: In order to assure a successful workshop, registrations must be received by October 12th; the $1.00 pre-registration fee is returnable only if the workshop is cancelled. Luncheon will be prepared on the basis of reservations received; therefore, please indicate on the registration form if you wish to be included.

Detach form below and mail, together with $1.00 pre-registration fee, by October 12th to Mrs. William Hydon, REGISTRAR, Algonquin Drive, M.D. 15, Newburgh, N.Y. 12550.

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I PLAN TO ATTEND THE SACRED DANCE GUILD N.Y. REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON OCTOBER 22nd.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

If registering for a group, please indicate number (enclose $1.00 pre-registration fee per person): _____

☐ Luncheon reservation desired

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE DOING

PAT SONEN traveled in Europe. "I found no Sacred Dance there. In fact, most church people in Ireland, British Isles, France, Germany, Switzerland stood with gaped mouths when I attempted to describe dance in a religious service. Most, of course, were devoted to the dance as an artform, but wondered why anyone in the church would care a toot about it. Many were dazed and impressed by such an idea and would have cherished an opportunity to see it done."

JUDY BENNETT reports:
1. Dance Choir (Cornwall Methodist Church) preparing a Christmas work, as yet untitled, using "Adoration of the Magi" from Respighi's Botticellian Triptych.
2. Wesleyan Dancers (Grace Methodist Church - Newburgh, N.Y.):
 a. Group of four dances using music by Poulenc, based on poem by Angela Morgan called Today; to be presented in October at retreat for ministers' wives;theme "To Be Alive in Such an Age".
 b. Entire worship service using dance and spoken word, based on Psalms, for the Methodist Church, Walden, N.Y. in November.
3. Both groups will:
 a. act as co-hostesses for the N.Y. Regional Workshop, Oct.22.
 b. participate in a Religious Arts Festival in January which will involve all churches in greater Newburgh area. We wil work with instrumental and choral groups and narrators for the two performances of James Weldon Johnson's God's Trombones. The sponsoring church is Union Presbyterian Church of Balmville.

MRS. CONSTANCE FISHER, dir. of the Sacred Dance Choir of California Western University, offered a sacred dance program at Wilshire Methodist Church, L.A., for the Mothers' day Madonna Festival and another program at Aldersgate Methodist Church (Orange County). The programs included 16 dancers and among the offerings were "The Lord's Prayer", "Eli, Eli","Shaker Hymn" and "The Song of Easter" (Ringwald).

RUTH ST. DENIS AND ANGELA SARTARIO presented a joint program at Orange Coast College in Costa Mesa Orange County in May. Ruth St. Denis spoke on the future of Dance in America and the world - emphasizing spiritual values - and danced "Incense". Angela offered a dance-lecture on the history of dance through the ages which featured "Man's Odyssey", "Man bound and released" and "The Triumph of the Soul". This was to music by Poulenc and was performed on a dark stage with 3 dancers manipulating lighted lanterns on a long pole, to represent the idea of dance projected beyond the body.

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THE DEADLINE FOR NEWS FOR THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER IS JANUARY 5,1967
Don't wait until Christmas; send me news in November! M. Taylor

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THIS SPACE
IS TO REMIND YOU
TO GET YOUR REGISTRATION
IN BY OCT. 12
FOR THE NEW YORK
REGIONAL WORKSHOP
ON OCTOBER 22
FILL OUT THE FORM
ON THE OTHER SIDE
RIGHT NOW!

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE DOING (continued)

LOUISE MATTLAGE directed the Fairfield County Modern Dance Workshop during the summer and concluded with a demonstration program in the garden of Mrs. Wm. Reeves of Southport, Conn. on Aug. 25. Ecclesiastes ch. 12, v. 1-7 in revised form, original compositions based on readings from the six major religions of the world and Four Part Prayer were presented.
This program will be repeated at the University of Bridgeport (Conn.) on October 19 under the University Department of Ministry in a convocation period. A program in Temple Beth Emet in Wilmington, Dela. will be on Sept. 13 and at the First Unitarian Church in Wilmington on October 3.

During August Louise represented Dance at the United Church of Christ Conference on the Arts at S. Kent, Conn. Nearly 100 teen age boys and girls were exposed to basic dance techniques and experienced some religious dance expression through exploration of space in movement. On August 12 all finished work in music, sculpture, painting, poetry, prose and dance was presented in the Chapel and a worship service was conducted by the students and Reverend Richard Fischer. Three dances by a group of boys and girls were a part of the service. One was choreographed to organ music composed by the conference music students; another to the wordsof the service (Salutation; Sursum Corda; Preface; Sanctus) as arranged by Mr. Fisher; and the third was danced to the invitation to communion withall the congregation joining in worshipful movement at its conclusion. This service was based on In Remembrance of Me by Richard D. Fischer, a redramatization of the Lord's Supper and the script is available through the author at Greens Farms Congregational Church, Greens Farms, Conn. Suggestions for the dance interludes available through Louise Mattlage in Westtown, Penna. 19395. (Brookford Farm) Dances of Faith, her new book is available through her, too. The July, 1966 Dance Magazine gave the book a good review and included a lovely photograph of her.

NELS ANDERSEN Dir. of Chr. Ed., First Congregational Church, Saginaw, Mich: Taught Creative Rhythmic Movement for two weeks at Children's Summer Theatre for children in grades 5,6,7.

"I taught the course on the Expressive Arts at the Town and Country Church Leadership School at Michigan State University again this summer. This is primarily with ministers and their wives. One minister took the course because his parishioners were asking 'What are we going to do with the art forms in our church?' Eagerness.

I taught Creative Dramatic Movement at Central Pennsylvania Synod's Religious Drama Workshop for a weekend in July. This is their second annual Drama Workshop held at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg. Others besides Lutherans attended. This was the first year for creative movement. I taught dance for 6 hours on Saturday.Not only did they want movement for worship with adults and youth. They wanted it for children. And they wanted it for actors - about 1/3 of the class was primarily interested in acting. It was a most rewarding weekend.

On September 12, Judy and I conducted a workshop and presented a worship service for the Women's Fellowship of the United Church of Christ in Midland, Mich.

Early in October I will be conducting a workshop for about 125 Lutheran church school teachers in our area. Now, how to involve this many people at one time??? They really need to experience it if they are going to use it in their teaching program."

(Virginia Lucke tells of Nels' leadership at the Michigan Youth Christian Arts Camp this summer.) (next page)

VIRGINIA LUCKE, of Grand Rapis, Mich. At the Third Michigan Youth Christian Arts Camp at Pilgrim Haven, August 20-27 the following S.D.G. members there were: Nels and Judy Andersen, Bernese Schlegel and I. Nels handled the morning sessions of Body Movement, then took the drama sessions. Other arts were: stage craft, graphic arts, creative writing. The campers come because they want to work and produce in these fields.

The Dance group chose to work on The Story of Creation by James Weldon Johnson with one girl moving as the narrator of the story (as the Reverend Richard Ford read it) and 6 girls reacting in small groups or as a whole.

They chose the folk song, "I Had the Strangest Dream Last Night" by Ed. McCurdy (in Baez recording). Choreography was as dream-like walking - reaching out but not touching as passed. The theme is that dreamed papers were signed promising not to go to war any more. Final ending - one awakes to appeal to other figures lying around to awaken, too, but they go on dreaming. The idea develops the need to do more than dream.

Three college girls worked on a trio of joyous movements - joy with prayerful motions incorporated - a free, less sustained dance, yet worshipful. Nels and I were pleased with their originality.

One girl had lost a very close friend in an auto accident this summer and Despair was her deeply felt mood. As she worked on expressing this mood, I told her frankly that if it was too personal and emotional we wouldn't use it in our closing program. But she worked on it so hard that she lifted the despair into the abstarct movements that spoke for and to us all. Was very proud of her. And in her hard work the atharsis came. The dean of the camp even commented on her change of attitude with out knowing the particulars of this. We felt that these involvements in the arts should help in the fears and gropings, in the personal and social issues of this historical point in which they find themselves.

VIRA KLAWE, dir. of RAGA Dancers, Huntington, L.I., N.Y. Mrs. Klawe during Sundays in October will conduct lecture demonstrations for the teen-agers (during their Sunday School time) at the Unitarian Fellowship in Huntington. Guest are welcome.

1st Sunday - Dance in Ancient Israel - Funeral Dance
2nd " India - Stick Dance
3rd " Mythology in Religion of Ancient Greeks
4th " Indian classical - prayer dance

SYLVIA HUMPHREY reports on the St. John's Sacred Dance Choir of Jr. and Sr. High school girls which she directs at the Congregational Church in Springfield. Over a two year period they have had special vesper services and performed on TV as well as before other congregations in Massachusetts. Their program includes: The Penitent (Prodigal Son), Creation (James W. Johnson), No Man is an Island, Nobody Knows the Troubles I've Seen, Lord's Prayer, 23rd and 100th Psalms and Prayer of St. Francis.

STANLEY ARENDHOLZ appreciated the training in the classes at Charles Street Meeting House in Boston, Mass. This was sponsored by the Unitarian Universalists. He says he is grateful to the NEWSLETTER which gave the advance notice of these classes.

Editor's note: Take a pencil and mark your items of interest: music, ideas, workshops and write for further information. If you don't have addresses, send to Lynn Sherwood marked "Please forward."

NOAMI ALEH-LEAF and her Festival Dance Company performed new liturgical works at a Cantors' Convention in Boston in June. They will appear in Hamilton and Toronto, Ontario on Nov. 18 and 19; also give a Sabbath Service on Dec. 17 in Coral Gables, Florida, and in Baltimore, Md. in February.

EVELYN BROADBENT (Concord, N.H.) "It has been encouraging to find that many small churches in New Hampshire are discovering that rhythmic expression is an excellent way to bring a fresh approach to worship for their young people. It has been my pleasure to work with some of these groups this past year. When a church asks for a program with sacred dance I suggest that they use their own girls rather than my bringing a group to them. I will offer to work with the group provided they find someone to work with the girls from their own church. In this way I hope to see more churches using this form of art."

DOROTHY HENDERSON, Box 303, Blue Hill, Maine) On July 22,1966 the Rhythmic Choir had an Evening Musical with the Kneisel Hall Music Students. "Ave Maria" (Shubert), "The Lord's Prayer" (Malotte) and the hymn "Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness" were given.

LURA ELLSWORTH , Branford, Conn. "On July 5 I conducted a 1-hour evening program as part of the Conn. Congregational Jr. Hi Pilgrim Conference at Sharon, Conn. The program consisted of an introduction of history and interpretations stressing creative worship and dance as dependent upon the creative ability of the group involved. Another leader and myself interpreted The Lord's Prayer with variations. Then I continued with the Hebrew "Eili, Eili" and included the conference of 120 young people and staff, giving possible motions for certain phrases. The closing worship service included "Enter into His Gates" and "Spirit of the Living God" (six participants), and "Prayer of St. Francis."

At the Northern New England School of Religious Education, Lake Winnepesaukee, N.H. (Aug.6-13) I conducted the Rhythmic Choir Workshop which took part in the closing Communion Service. The group of 3 children, 2 high school students, and 3 adults gave a simple candle light processional and the Communion Anthems with choir background. "Spirit of the Living God" and the Shaker tune, "Simple Gifts" were interpreted during the week.

JEAN WILLARD (Central St., N. Springfield, Vt.):

The North Springfield Baptist Rhythmic Choir has been very busy this past year and looks as if it will have another full year ahead. They participated at the Baptist State Convention, State Women's Conference, Centenial celebration at the St. Alban's Baptist Church as well as morning worship in the local church. Among the selections were "Fairest Lord Jesus", "The Lord's Prayer", a poem "True Freedom".

Now that the group has been started, it is getting minimal support from the Board of Christian Education and interest is growing so there are hopes that the group will be sponsored and incorporated into the church program.

The Choir will be appearing in the Springfield Calvary Baptist Church on Sept. 11 and will present 4 numbers. On October 14 they will appear at the Poultney Methodist Church for their women's group. Tentative plans are being made for a Christmas Program.

MARGARET FISK TAYLOR, Athens, Ohio:
May 15 at 9:30 service at the Episcopal Church: 9 junior and Jr.Hi girls interpreted The Lord's Prayer (Robertson) while congregation was kneeling during the morning service. Bach's"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" (7) during the offering; "Turn, Turn, Turn" 4 boys and 3 girls, with University student singing and playing the guitar. (This is from Ecclesiastes: "There is a time").
May 20 from 7:30 - 10 P.M. NEW DIMENSION IN RELIGIOUS DANCE sponsored by Forrest Coggan and M.F.T. At 7:30 we had Communication Thru Movement with a large group participating in the undercroft below the sanctuary. At 9:00 in the sanctuary Forrest gave"Invocation" and presented a group of 5 Ohio University students in a tremendously spirited performance of Bernstein's"Psalm 100". M.T. presented "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" and "Eili, Eili" and "Isolation - Relatedness" to Hindemith's "Sonata III" with Ohio University men and women. The whole evening was dynamic and well received.
June 26-July 3 - Daily participation by 100 youth and adults at the Camp Farthest Out at Wesley College, Dover, Dela.
July 7-9 Laboratory School at American Baptist Assembly, Green Lake, Wisc. where 100 participated in about 8 hours of basic creative movement for use in church schools.
July 11-15 Choristers' Guild at Colorado Woman's College, Denver where 200 adults and 14 children participated and presented the processional, "Sing to the Lordof Harvest" and "Now the Green Blade Riseth".
July 20 in Tokyo, Japan, I went with Rosalie Matsuoka (friend of Louise Mattlage and at one time active in a Rhythmic Choir in New Rochelle, N.Y.) to the studio of Mme. Futaba Hanayagi! She is the outstanding classical Japanese dancer and a film of her dancing with her assisting choir "It is Well With My Soul" is available thru the Presbyterian Office at 475 Riverside Dr. Well, she was the most gracious and gifted person I have met. She gave us delicious refreshments that I could scarcely touch because I couldn't look away from the beautiful dancing of her pupils - children and adults. Mme.Futaba graciously danced several numbers in the midst of an extremely hot day. Rosalie hopes to work with a group in her church in Tokyo. What years of discipline in refined movements!
July 21-25 at Kiyosato Camp Farthest Out where I led Rhythms each day with 40 young Japanese men and women - all participating with real ability and understanding! What enthusiasm!
July 25-26 at the annual conference of Christian workers of all denominations in Japan. This was at Karuizawa where I stayed in a Japanese Inn and slept and ate and listened to programs - all on the floor. I was given 45 minutes and showed two of my film strips and talked (via a gracious interpreter, Dr. Ogawa, head of Audio-Visual Christian work). 250 were in the group. Wonderful aware Christians.
Aug. 8-12 Choristers' Guild at Salem College at Winston-Salem, N.C. Similar activity to the Denver conference with 200 participants.
Oct. 2 Ohio Univ. group will present "Isolation-Relatedness" for the Vesper Service when all the Campus Religious groups cooperate.

News: The United Church Press will publish SYMBOLIC DANCE IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP which is the largely rewritten "The Art of the Rhythmic Choir", which has been out of print! It will be available in 1967 (maybe June). In the September issue of The International Journal of Religious Education (475 Riverside Dr., N.Y.) "A Festive Thanksgiving Processional" written by me with 6 photos of our group in "Sing to the Lord of Harvest."

WHAT OUR MEMBERS ARE DOING (continued)

DIANA AVERY, director of the Sacred Dance Guild of Miami, Florida:
First Presbyterian Church of Pompano Beach - Children's Fellowship - Concert
Coral Gables Congregational Church - Seminar and Concert
YM-YWHA (Hebrew Assn. of Miami) Brotherhood Week Concert
Palmetto Elementary School, Miami - Concert for Students
Miami Springs High School - Workshop and Concert
Palm Beach Jr. College - Lecture/Workshop/Concert
Howard Drive's Elementary Sch., Miami - Concert for students
Ancient Spanish Monastery, N. Miami Beach, - Medieval Festival - 3 new pieces choreographed to the 12th Century Spanish Cantigas (Prologo, Cantiga CXXXIX and CLXVI) by Alfonso El Sabio. These are songs in honor of the Blessed Virgin.
Bryan Memorial Methodist Church, Miami - Concert
Unitarian Annual Meeting (Diplomat Hotel, Hollywood, Fla. - special material requested for choreography.

"As you can see, we have performed for a variety of age groups and have covered a good cross-section of audiences. We are pleased that we have been asked to return to several places this coming year. This past summer we have spent time on individual creative movement and improving technique. We hope to get to the June Institute next year."

MARY JOHNSON (Box 177, Peterborough, N.H.) writes:
"An unusual service was presented for Children's Sunday last June. The Twenty-third Psalm was done with a 6 year old girl and an adult man. It was most effective.Also presented "Covenant of Worship".

VIRGINIA SUTHERLAND (11 Central St., Peterborough, N.H.)
Four high school girls presented the carol "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" in the sanctuary as part of a Christmas program for the Women's Fellowship of the Union Congregational Church. The movements given in the November issue of Church School Worker (United Church Press) were used with variations adapted by the director and group.

CAROL B. DAVIS, dir. of the Sacred Dance Choir of the First Parish Church, Dorchester, Mass. tells of a Youth Sunday program. They presented a correlation of Psalm 150 and the hymn, "Yigdal". The six girls carried small percussion instruments (hand drum, finger cymbals, hand cymbals, tambourine, gong, etc.). A reader and voice choir were also utilized.

VIJA VETRA, on the faculty of the International Dance School at Carnegie Hall, N.Y.C., teaches Indian and Spanish Dance:
May 15 - Performed an hour vesper program - St. Peter's Lutheran Church, N.Y.C.
June 5 - First Unitarian Church, Pittsburgh, Pa. - Children's Service (Bach Chorales, R. Tagore Poems)
June 12 - St. Clements Episcopal Church - Sun. noon Service - Classical dances of India and devotional poetry
End of Sept. will perform at Riverside Church, and Community Church in N.Y.C.
Oct. 7 - Carnegie Recital Hall, N.Y.C. - Solo Dance Recital
Oct. 15 - Great Hall,Plummer Park, L.A., Calif. - Solo recital
Oct. 22 - Latvian House, San Francisco, Calif. Solo recital

EVELYN OSHIRO, dir. of the Rhythmic Choir of the Pearl City Community Church, Pearl City, Hawaii presented a Vesper Service on August 3. This followed a talk and interpretation of Psalm 27 by Margaret Fisk Taylor. Four H.S. boys and four H.S. girls came briskly down the center aisle to "Just as I am" sung by a choir. The group was in ordinary clothes and was even more effective than if robed. There was dramatic contrast in movements and individual portrayal as well as unison designs. "For the Beauty of the Earth" and "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" were strong and meaningful. This group is backed by the pastor and the church and should be effective in leadership. Quite a few are of Japanese background and have an innate poise.

SHIRLEY FRITZ,(Rt. 3, Troy, Ohio) wrote briefly on a postcard: "Annual Conference and then on to National Youth Conference in N.Y. made tight, tense schedules all summer. I think we have had some effect on much of the conventional worship form of many Brethren. It has been such a dynamic time - deep, responsive fulfilling." (Shirley is in the Church of the Brethren.)

SHIRLEY STAGER, director of Center Congregational Church, Manchester Mass. and Priscilla Baxter report" " This summer for the 50th anniversary dedication of Camp Claire, Hamburg, Conn. Shirley and a group of high school girls presented a worship service in the outdoor chapel. The girls designed and made simple red tunics and interpreted "Spirit of the Living God" as a candlelight processional, "The Creation" and "Turn, Turn, Turn". The candle technique came from the Drew SDG Institute led by Drid Williams. "Turn, Turn, Turn" was completely choreographed by one of the girls.

JOAN STRICKLAND JOHNSON: (9231 Elliot Ave. So., Bloomington, Minn.) is one of the directors of the Twin Cities Worship Choir Workshop which is publishing a booklet entitled "On Bended Knee" (25¢). TWCWC is promoting a Workshop to be held on Jan. 15 at Messiah Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minn. Margaret Taylor will be one of the leaders. An article is in the July magazine The Lutheran telling of her work -"This Choir makes Worship Come Alive".

KATHARINE RUTGERS of Greenwich, Conn. took part in a program for the Greenwich Travel Club on Aug. 26, interpreting in dance "Religious Meditation" by Louis Gottshalk, with choroegraphy by Vincenzo Celli, and "Peace, Roses of Peace", verse by Katharine Rutgers. Mrs. Rutgers is dance therapist at the St. Barnabas Hospital in N.Y.C.

BETTY WOODBRIDGE (3726 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis, Ind.) taught dance at the Dunkirk conference for junior high youth. She had 7 girls who interpreted "Take My Life" and "Spirit of the Living God". "None of them had done this before, but they responded faster than any group I have had and were creative. I feel that inspiration and reverence form the backbone for such group work."

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Martha Graham DANCE FILMS are available through Rembrandt Films, 267 W. 25th St., N.T., N.Y. 10001 "Appalachian Spring" can be rented for $20.

Mme.Futaba Hanayagi in "It is Well with my Soul" is available thru Mrs. Jeanne Carruthers, Presbyterian Church Offices, 475 Riverside Dr., N.Y., N.Y. A classic dancer and a devout Christian and an assisting dance choir; also skilled production in the film.

IMPROVISATION: "THE MOST CREATIVE APPRAOCH TO DANCE"
by Barbara Mettler

Excerpts from her article in the July 1966 issue of Dance Magazine:

"It is in the nature of movement that when a pendulum has swung as far as it can go in one direction, it must inevitably swing back in the opposite direction. . . . Dance seems to have reached the limit of its swing in the direction of theatrical techniques and audience entertainment, so that now there is developing an outspoken need for dance as creative activity.

Creative activity . . . means participating actively in the creative process rather than attending passively to some one else's creative work. All art is activity: something to do, not something to sit and watch others do. The artist creates a work because he himself has need of the experience. We are social beings, so an experience is enhanced by being shared. . . .

Let us not segregate the artist from the rest of society. It is true that some of us have more need than others for creative art work, but there is some of this need in everyone. It is a need which concerns the individual, the group , and art itself. There can be no healthy art until more people are creating.

What does it mean to create? To create means to make some thing new, something that has never existed before. . . . It is sure to be new if it is an expression of you. You are new. You have never existed before, and there has never been anyone like you. No two people are exactly alike and insofar as your work expresses your unique individuality - your personality, feelings, rhythms - it will be new. It will be creative. . . .

In my studio we stress dance improvisation. Improvisation, as we practice it, can open the doors of dance as a creative art activity to everyone. It means following your own movement feelings in the creation of your own movement forms. . . . Improvisation offers dancers of every age, on every level of experience, of every physical and psychological condition, opportunity to create dances in accord with their true nature and needs. . . .

Rhythm means pulsation: the rising and falling of force (energy) as it flows along in time and space. . . .

Improvisation is a continuous process of creation, uniting contnet, form and technique in an integral whole. The content of a dance is the inner experience which the movement expresses. The form is the outward perceptible aspect of the experience. The technique is the means of perfecting the form. Today dancers put so much attention on technique that both form and content suffer.

The form of a dance should be an organic outgrowth of the content. . . . Dance cannot be wholy intellectualized. It must be experienced, felt. Dance improvisation is a conscious tapping of the unconscious sources of creative power.

My studio is circular because we wish to liberate dance in all directions, as a three dimensional art.

(continued on next page)

Mettler (continued)

Audiences, who are welcome at any time, sit on steps around the perimeter. This arrangement provides a very intimate relationship between dancers and audience, which seems to me to be in accord with the needs of our time. . . .

Our performances make observers not only want to dance themselves but to feel that they can, and this is exactly what we are aiming for. We would rather dance with people than for them, and all the work of my studio is directed toward breaking down the artificial barriers which stand between the average person and dance as a creative art activity.

Improvision means being wholly involved in the creative process, deep in the esthetic experience of movement. Esthetic experience means joy in the expressive form of the movement for the sake of the experience itself. We life in an age wholly dominated by utilitarian values. Hence so little time for enjoyment of dance as creative activity. Often I am asked, "Where does this dancing lead?" "Where will it get you?" No artist asks such questions. He creates for the joy of creating. . . ."

Barbara Mettler has touched many of the lives of SDG members - including Ruby Henderson. Her studio is in Tucson, Arizona (3131 Cherry Ave.) Write to her regarding her books which include Creative Dance for Children and Materials of Dance. Perhaps some of us may get to her studio to learn her basic and creative ways. Get the Dance issue to read the entire article and see the photos.

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EUGENE LORING TALKS TO OLGA MAYNARD

Excerpts from this article in the July 1966 issue of Dance Magazine (Loring: American Sch. of Dance & Univ. Cal. in Irvine, Calif.)

These Three - And then There Were Four . . . concerns Michael H. Schwerner, Andrew Goodman, and James E. Chaney, the three civil rights workers who disappeared in June 1964 in Mississippi and whose bodies were found in an earth dam on August 4 of that year. Loring sees "these three" as bringers of gifts of devotion, like the "three wise men" of scripture. The gifts they brought were hope, faith, and love for their fellow men. The rest of the title of the ballet - And Then There Were Four - affirms that "these three" did not die in vain, that after the three came a fourth and then many others, a multitude of others blessed with the human ability to care greatly. . . .

He says, "I think dance of dance as movement - meaningful movement." As for the themes of these ballets, aggression and the rights of man, individually and in the mass, are matters which are much on Loring's mind right now. . . .

"An educated dancer is exactly like an educated person in ordinary life; he has a large vocabulary, knows the meanings of many words, and can communicate in a variety of forms. Movement always has meaning, but dance performed like an exercise will be superficial. What I call an accomplished dancer is a technician in command of several forms with a dance vocabulary fluent enough to express anything the choreographer requires in a work."

HELEN TAMIRIS DIES
Excerpts from this article in the Sept. 1966 issue of Dance Magazine

Helen Tamiris, one of the most important figures in American modern dance, died of cancer Aug. 4 at the age of 64. Her passing brings to an end what Miss Tamiris once referred to as a constant struggle "to define the vigor and intensity of contemporary American life by means of dance." . . .

She said that, "The validity of the modern dance is rooted in its ability to express modern problems and, further, to make audiences want to do something about them." . . .

She wrote: "Art is international, but the artist is a product of nationality and his principal duty to himself is to express the spirit of his race. . .We must not forget the age we live in.. . . There are no general rules. Each work of art creates its own code. . . Will people never rebel against artificialities, pseudo-romanticism, and affected sophistication? The dance of today must have a dynamic tempo and be valid, precise, spontaneous, free, normal, natural and human."

* * *

(Her film of Negro Spirituals is available for workshops. Write to M.J. Wolbers for her RESOURCE GUIDE. We must carry on this struggle to clarify the concerns of our times and bring them with this vigor, intensity and human element into our churches and out thru our churches. So we join with the words of Jose Limon spoken at an earlier time:We "celebrate your courage, your steadfastness, and above all your high heart and your gallantry. . . . Bravo, Helen!"

* * *

THE RHYTHMIC CHOIR - an article published in the United Church Letter, June 1966, published in Quezon City, Philippines:

The Rhythmic Choir is another form of dramatic interpretation which is gaining popularity with experimental groups who want to deviate from the regular run of traditional acting. Rhythmic Movement is a combination of dance and mime. Gestures, symbolic p ses, movement are used in interpreting the meaning or mood of a passage, a prayer, a psalm, a hymn or a poem. . . .

In the Christian Art Caravanners' presentation, music was used, either on tapewhen there was electricity, or sung "live" when there was none. Professional or semi-professional dancers are in demand for this sort of thing, but in amateur presentations even those who have not taken lessons in ballet can do their own interpretations by using simpler gestures and body movements. In fact, the simpler the better, for the average onlooker in the church congregation could easily get confused with fancy choreography, and instead of getting the message, he may think of something else - perhaps misunderstand the intention of the producers by calling the whole presentation a sacrilege. It is a wise thing to introduce or explain the purpose of Rhythmic Movement before the presentation to a congregation that has never seen one like it before. If the congregation happens to be anti-dance or anti-anything that deviates from the traditional program of worship, it is better not to attempt using Rhythmic Movement as part of the worship aids inside the walls of the church.

Note: Thank you, Evelyn Broadbent, for sharing this news with us.

The University of Hawaii Theatre Dance Group presented 9 dance scenes in the medieval morality play "Everyman" which was double-cast with actors and dancers. (April, 1966)

Several actors and dancers from the drama department presented an avant-garde dance-drama called "She", written by drama student and professional fold singer Maria Illo, off-campus at the Church of the Crossroads, Honolulu, on May 7 & 8.

TONI BECK choreographed and directed the National Methodist Conference Pageant, "The Church is Here", on June 8 at Moody Coliseum for 10,000 visiting clergymen, in Dallas, Texas.

Television Reviews culled from comments by Ann Barzel of Dance Magazine, August 1966:

May 8 -"John Butler was choreographer for a half-hour of dancing to poems of a religious cast by Gerard Manley Hopkins. The theme as presented on Lamp Unto My Feet (CBS) was the rediscovery of the artist by the church. Earle Hyman read four Hopkins poems. The Butler dancers first danced tentative movements to each one, then, as the music of Lou Harrison took over, they went into strongly inspired dance. Since the dancers were Carmen de Lavallade, Mary Hinkson, Bertram Ross and Robert Powell, the dancing was of the first order. . . . The final dance, concerned with the grandeur of God, was excellent."

"Clarity, interesting movement, and imaginative pr duction marked another Jac Venza production, this time on CBS' Look Up and Live. Alvin Epstein, known more as an actor than dancer, though he has studied with Martha Graham, used his dance economically and well in a beautiful mime program titled "Prayers From the Ark." As a sort of beatnik Noah among stylized toy animals, to the taped poetry of his own voice he mimed animal movements and said prayers for understanding and patience in the name of the animals. There was the loneliness of the little mouse, the fatigue of the old horse. Like a cat he licked his hands and reared at mention of a dog. He waddled like a duck, strutted like a rooster and withal presented a most rewarding experience - especially for dancers."

Editor's note: Sounds interesting to both adults and children. Hope it may be available on film.
On Sept. 25 on Lamp Unto My Feet we shall have the opportunity to see "the Captive Lark", a ballet dramatizing the religious visions experienced by Joan of Arc as she waits for her trial. Carmen de Lavallade dances the role of Joan. Choreography by John Butler. (I'll have to go to the 8 A.M. service in order to see it. This is the reason so many of us miss these programs - because we are involved in our churches.)

REJOICE! Music for the worship of God in the Twentieth Century By students of the General Theological Seminary (Episcopal), dir. by H. Bruce Lederhouse. Scepter Records, 254 W. 54th St., N.Y. Music for unison chorus - thru Marks Music Corp., 136 W. 52nd St., New York, 10019."This music was written to help Christians in the 20th centuryexpress their conviction that life in the NOW is a gift from God. . . . The rhythmic drive of the Kyrie carries the singers along in a soaring cry of finite man. Our Father reflects quiet dependence , culminating in a shout of praise. Its zest and joyfulness are meant to bind the worshipping Church together in "shouting to God with loud songs of Joy."

PRAISE THE LORD WITH THE DANCE

BY PIXIE HAMMOND

"Praise the Lord with the dance" is more than a scripture verse to many dance choirs throughout the country. Such groups are accepting the responsibility of leading congregations in worship through the art of movement, just as a singing choir does with music. Choirs and congregations alike are discovering that the art of the dance can bring into our worship a new sense of wonder and joy --elements which too frequently are lacking. If the word dance in the context of worship seems to be an anomaly to you, then disinfect the word. Lift it out of any unworthy connotations. Dancing is mentioned many times in the Bible, and, as far as I can discover, never with disfavor. In fact, the opposite seems to be true. We are told specifically to sing and dance before the Lord! I think our reticence to use dance in the church stems partly from our thinking that the human body is somehow ugly or sinful--something that wecan't get rid of, but that we ought to ignore. Again, the New Testament view is quite different. Our bodies, we are told, are created by God, fearfully and wonderfully made. I think we have not begun to take seriously the most amazing thing of all--that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. If this is true, should we not glorify God with our bodies? Is not the body a worthy channel for the expression of His grace and beauty? More, is it not the most logical and immediately available tool for expressing His message?

Worship, by definition, is the offering of praise and adoration to God. . . . This is where the arts can be the handmaidens of the church. They have the power to lift us out of ourselves into an awareness of God's presence. For centuries we have used music, painting, sculpture, architecture, drama and literature. But we have almost ignored the art of interpretive movement. Yet, through dance, we can be led into the very heart of God. Frankly, I cannot explain how this seeming magic takes place. I only know that I have seen it happen week after week, for more than fifteen years. A well trained dance choir, that is willing to spend time in prayer can be a channel for lifting congregations into a divine communion with Christ.

Part of the effectiveness of dance in proclaiming the gospel rests in the power of visual symbols. (Witness the power of television over radio.) To see an idea portrayed is far more compelling than to hear it talked about. . . . The symbol of kneeling, for instance, stands for obedience, humility, dedication, and when it is brought to life before a congregation, it inspires them to a deeper dedication. . . . And something takes place in the life of the dancer whose art is used to glorify God. . . .

My own first experience with dance in worship took place years ago in the privacy of my own bedroom. I had just read a book (Margaret Fisk Taylor's "The Art of the Rhythmic Choir") and was so thrilled with the idea, I decided to try it right then and there. In the back of the book were direction (by Evelyn Broadbent) for interpreting the Lord's Prayer. I knelt on the floor, the open book in front of me and folded my hands. "Our Father," I raised my eyes. . . . "Hallowed be Thy name," I bowed low, and something trembled within me. . . . "For Thine is the Kingdom," I extended my arms, filled with wonder thatso simple a movement could make

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His presence so real. "And the power, and the glory." A strange strength lifted my heart. As I folded my hands for the amen, and knelt again, I knew that while some are called to preach, others to teach, that I had been called to dance. It was a deeply moving religious experience, and, to this day, I consider dance a sacred calling.

I hope it is obvious that what I have in mind is not some pretty presentation added to the service for interest or uniqueness. Nor a performance by children for admiring adults. Such things are valid elsewhere, but not in a worship service. Sacred dance, if it is used at all, should be an integral part of the service--a valid expression of a genuine and vital communion between Christ and ourselves. This requires a combination of skill in movement and a deep spiritual dedication. And this <u>combination</u> must be stressed. If either of these qualities is missing, sacred dance can be very disappointing. The movements alone, no matter how skilled, will not carry the message. Religious devotion, no matter how sincere, cannot wholly make up for a sloppy performance.

The director of the dance choir must have a real orientation in the elements of a worship service. . . . Formal dance training is not required, but we can expect the director and choir members alike to be willing to work at the skills of their art. The keynote of dance in the sanctuary is simplicity, in costume as well as in the dances themselves. This does not mean that all sacred dancing should be slow and lyrical. There are, of course, interpretations which call for a quickened pace or sharper movements. But too much sophistication . . . will not serve the purpose of the worship service. This is not to condone poor presentation. Whereever did we get the idea that if it is to be presented in church it can be second-rate? Religious art is a gift to God--how dare it be less than the best? The choir needs enough rehearsal to allow the participants to be relaxed and confident, so that the interpretations are as selfless as possible. Then the dance is a joyful offering to the Christ.

Our first aim is to grow spiritually, and dance is simply the expression of this seeking. We try to understand the implications of the scripture, hymn or religious idea which we are interpreting. In my own dance choir I try to devote about half of our rehearsal time to prayer, meditation, and theological discussions. The other half of the time we spend on learning the movements. This not only makes rehearsal more interesting, but it makes learning the movements easier. When the dancer has gained an understanding of what he wants to project, and experienced the feeling himself, then what he feels can be transmitted through dance in such a way that the congregation experiences the same insight. . . .

Perhaps this article is not so much a plea to use dance in worship, as a call to discover a genuine sense of joy in one's experience of worship. "Rejoice in the Lord." "Let all that is within me bless His holy name." When we really discover His Spirit within us, we can't keep from praising Him with words, with music, with drama--and with dance!

Mrs. Robert Hammond, 6834 Rappahannock Way, Carmichael, California Dir.of adult SD Choir, mother of three children, with Mon. sessions 9-12 each week, baby-sitter , and "great enjoyment".